

# Food, Inc.

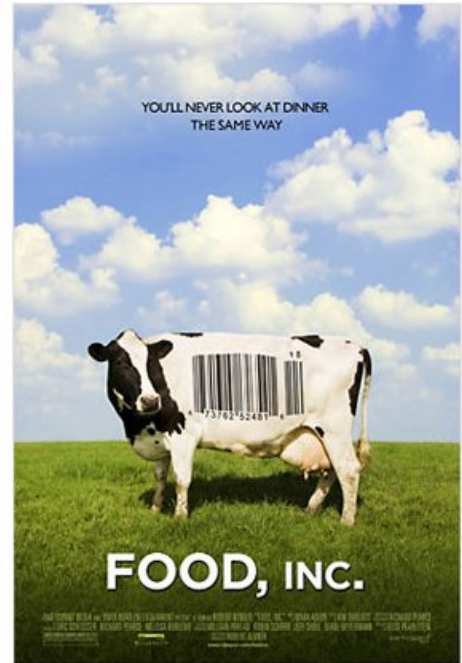
Distributed: Wednesday, February 15  
 Due: Packet: February 23  
 Project: March 1  
 Grading: Packet: 50 points  
 Project: 70 points

As you watch the movie, complete this guided viewing packet.

If you miss a day, you can access a streaming version by clicking on our class at [www.mrtripodi.org](http://www.mrtripodi.org).

Some components of this packet ask you to gather information; others require a personal response or reflective writing.

*If you want to continue watching provocative feature length films in class, it is imperative that you complete these packets.*



## DAYS ONE AND TWO (0:00 to 0:38)

### Fact-finding questions

1. The modern American supermarket has, on average, \_\_\_\_\_ different products.
2. The industrial food system began with \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In the 1970s, the top five beef packers controlled \_\_\_\_\_% of the market.
4. Today, the top \_\_\_\_\_ packers control more than \_\_\_\_\_% of the market.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is the biggest meat packer in the history of the world.
6. After the decline of \_\_\_\_\_, many farmers in the South turned to \_\_\_\_\_ farming.
7. How do large agribusiness corporations "keep the farmers under their thumbs"?

### KEY VOCABULARY

USDA:

"industrial food":

subsidy (to subsidize):

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8. A typical farmer with two chicken houses has borrowed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and makes about \$ \_\_\_\_\_ a year.

9. "So much of our industrial food turns out to be clever rearrangements of \_\_\_\_\_."

10. We now grow exponentially more corn per acre than in the past. This is thanks to:

A.

B.

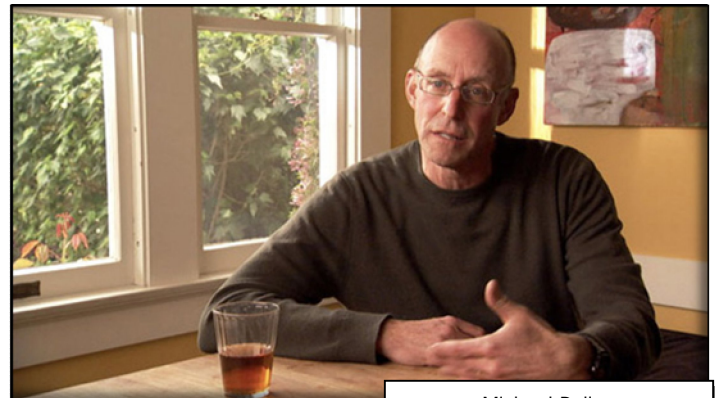
C.

11. In the U.S., \_\_\_\_\_% of our land base is planted to corn.

12. The average American eats \_\_\_\_\_ pounds of meat per year.

13. What's a CAFO?

14. In the 1970s, there were thousands of slaughterhouses in the U.S. Today, there are \_\_\_\_\_.



Michael Pollan

15. "The biggest predictor of obesity is \_\_\_\_\_."

16. "The media blames obesity on a crisis of \_\_\_\_\_."

17. "We're hardwired [in biological terms] to go for three tastes: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_."

18. For tomorrow, write at least one paragraph in response to one of the prompts below:

A. Return to questions 3 and 4. Why does the movie imply this is a big deal? Is it? Explain your answer.

B. You've now seen the inside of an industrial chicken house. How does it differ from what you expected? What are your thoughts?

C. Michael Pollan said, "We've skewed our food system to the bad calories, and it's not an accident." What does he mean by this? Why did it happen? What are the long-term effects of this?

Write your response on the back of this page. You may type this assignment and staple it into the packet if you prefer.





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DAYS FOUR AND FIVE (0:58 to end)

1. Why is Walmart moving to stock more organic food?
2. How does Gary Hirshberg of Stonyfield Farms explain why selling to megaretailers like Walmart is actually good for the environment?
3. In 1900, the average farmer could feed \_\_\_\_\_ people.
4. Today, the average farmer can feed \_\_\_\_\_ people.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is the chemical company that developed DDT and Roundup.
6. What makes Roundup Ready Soybeans unique?
7. By 2008, \_\_\_\_\_% of U.S. soybeans had the patented gene.
8. To bring a steer to slaughter requires \_\_\_\_\_ gallons of oil.

Defining our food

What does it mean if food is organic?

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SUMMATIVE PROJECT (70 points)

You may create a multimedia presentation, write an essay, or find a different method to creatively share what you've learned. Choose from the following topics. If you have an idea that's not on here, check with me for approval.

1. Imagine that you are charged with making sure a death like Kevin Kowalczyk's never happens again. What steps would you take to ensure it doesn't? Why do you think it would work?
2. Interview a grandparent, other family member, or acquaintance over the age of 60, and ask how what they ate as a teenager differs from what you eat today.
3. What can people do to be better informed about what is in the foods they eat? Develop an action plan, assess the costs involved, and explain how eating habits would change as a result.
4. Research, analyze, and present the prevalence of corn and soybeans in American diets.
5. Investigate the history of corn subsidies, and explain the U.S. government's role in dictating what's among those 47,000 products at the grocery store.
6. Calculate the history of one meal. Note everything that you eat at one meal, and find how it got to your plate.